

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

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R 232250Z JAN 77

FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2619

INFO CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 WELLINGTON 0265

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MILI, WS

SUBJECT: WESTERN SAMOAN REQUEST FOR LOGISTICAL ASSISTANCE;
VISIT OF QUEEN ELIZABETH

REF: CINCPAC (DTG 210516Z JAN 77)

1. CONVERSATION OF ASI EIKENI (MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC AFFAIRS, GOVERNMENT OF WESTERN SAMOA) WITH POLAD, REPORTED REFTEL, CONFIRMS OUR SUSPICIONS THAT EIKENI (A) DID NOT WANT TO HEAR THAT SHIPMENT OF VEHICLES COULD NOT BE MADE BY USG FREE OF CHARGE AND (B) WANTED TO BE IN POSITION TO TAKE CREDIT IF VEHICLES WERE SUCCESSFULLY ACQUIRED OR TO BLAME SOMEONE ELSE IF THEY WERE NOT.

2. FOR THE RECORD, I AM HERewith SETTING FORTH THE NUMEROUS, VARIED AND TIMELY EFFORTS MADE BY EMBASSY WELLINGTON TO COMMUNICATE TWO BASIC FACTS TO THE GOWS. THESE WERE (A) NO NEW U.S. MADE CONVERTIBLES ARE AVAILABLE IN HONOLULU, LOS ANGELES OR ANYWHERE ELSE, AND (B) THAT WHEREVER THE GOWS LOCATED SUITABLE VEHICLES, IT WOULD HAVE TO PAY THE COMMERCIAL RATE FOR SURFACE OR AIR SHIPMENT, REGARDLESS OF WHETHER IT WAS BY COMMERICAL CARRIER OR DOD.

3. ON DECEMBER 3 (RECEIVED DECEMBER 6), MINISTER EIKENI SENT ME
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A COMMERCIAL WIRE ADVISING THAT HE HAD THAT DAY CABLED GOVERNOR ARIYOSHI OF HAWAII, REQUESTING THE AIRLIFTING OF VEHICLES FOR QUEEN'S VISIT FROM HONOLULU TO PAGO PAGO "ON YOUR MILITARY PLANES." EIKENI ADDED, THAT HE WOULD BE GRATEFUL FOR ANY HELP I COULD GIVE HIM WITH REGARD TO HIS REQUEST. ON DECEMBER 7, I REPEATED EIKENI'S TELEGRAM TO CINCPAC AND ASKED THAT POLAD ADVISE ME OF GOVERNOR ARIYOSHI'S REPLY AND

ESTIMATED COSTS OF AIRSHIPMENT VIA MAC. I EXPRESSED MY UNDERSTANDING THAT THERE IS NO KNOWN SOURCE OF FUNDING FOR SUCH SHIPMENTS. CINCPAC RESPONDED ON DECEMBER 11 (RECEIVED DECEMBER 13) THAT ARIYOSHI'S REPLY BEING DRAFTED, THAT HE WILL ADVISE GOWS THAT CONVERTIBLES NOT BEING MANUFACTURED AND HAWAII HAS NO MEANS OF SHIPPING. CINCPAC ALSO PROVIDED COST DATA FOR AIRLIFTING TWO SEDANS FROM HONOLULU TO PAGO PAGO VIA COMMERCIAL AND MILITARY (U.S.-GOVERNMENT RATE AND NON-U.S. GOVERNMENT RATE). SIMULTANEOUSLY ON DECEMBER 13, I RECEIVED A TELEGRAM FROM THE U.S. CONSULAR AGENT IN APIA, MACKENZIE, WHO IS THE FATHER-IN-LAW OF EIKENI) INFORMING ME THAT A LETTER FROM THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT (TOMA) ADVISED THAT "THE GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN ABLE TO FIND ANOTHER CAR FOR HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN'S VISIT." WITH THAT INFORMATION, I CABLED CINCPAC, THANKED THEM FOR THE INFORMATION BUT ADVISED THAT THE GOWS HAD BEEN ABLE TO LOCATE OTHER VEHICLES AND EIKENI'S REQUEST HAD BEEN OVERTAKEN BY EVENTS. AS FAR AS I WAS CONCERNED THE ISSUE WAS CLOSED.

4. ON JANUARY 5, I RECEIVED A SECOND TELEGRAM FROM EIKENI, DATED DECEMBER 31, REQUESTING THAT HIS "PLEA FOR ASSISTANCE" OF DECEMBER 3 BE ADVANCED TO THE STATE DEPARTMENT. I TELEGRAPHED THE U.S. CONSULAR AGENT IN APIA ON JANUARY 7, LAID OUT THE RECORD AND ASKED HIM TO ADVISE ME IMMEDIATELY WHETHER OR NOT THE GOWS HAD INDEED LOCATED OTHER VEHICLES OR IF EIKENI'S LATEST REQUEST WAS THE CURRENT ONE. ON JANUARY 11, MACKENZIE SENT THE FOLLOWING TELEGRAM,

QUOTE. MANY THANKS FOR YOUR TELEGRAM JANUARY 7 WESTERN SAMOA GOVERNMENT HAVE NOW DECIDED TO PURCHASE TWO CONVERTIBLES AS AGREED
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BETWEEN UK AND WESTERN SAMOA GOVERNMENT CONCERNING QUEENS VISIT STOP HEAD OF STATE OFFICIAL CAR WAS ORDERED TO COINCIDE WITH QUEENS VISIT BUT THE CAR WON'T BE HERE IN TIME THEY ARE STILL PROCEEDING WITH HEAD OF STATE CAR BUT TO ARRIVE AFTER QUEENS VISIT WESTERN SAMOA GOVERNMENT NOW ARE PROCEEDING ACQUIRING 2 BLACK CONVERTIBLES 1976/1977 MODELS CHEV IMALA OR SIMILAR MAKE STOP WOULD REQUEST HELP OF US MILITARY TO AIRLIFT VEHICLES EITHER FROM HONOLULU OR LOS ANGELES TO PAGO PAGO AND THEY WILL FERRY VEHICLES OVER TO APIA ASI MINISTER ECONOMIC AFFAIRS FLYING TO HONOLULU JANUARY 14 AND IF CARS NOT AVAILABLE IN HAWAII THEN HE WILL FLY ON TO LOS ANGELES ASI HOPES TO DISCUSS AIRLIFT OF VEHICLES WITH COMMANDER OF PACIFIC FLEET ASI REQUEST YOUR HELP AMBASSADOR IN THIS REGARD VEHICLES MUST BE THERE IN APIA BY END OF JANUARY 1977 THE AFORESAID IS INFORMATION RECEIVED BY ME FROM SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT AND MINISTER ASI REGARDS.
MACKENZIE UNQUOTE

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5. RECOGNIZING THAT GOWS WAS STILL NOT GETTING MESSAGE STRAIGHT, EMBASSY POLITICAL OFFICER TELEPHONED MACKENZIE JANUARY 11 AND ASKED HIM TO MAKE SURE GOWS UNDERSTOOD THESE BASIC THINGS: (A) AUTOS OF TYPE GOWS SEEKING NO LONGER PRODUCED IN U.S.; (B) EVEN SHOULD GOWS LOCATE SUITABLE CARS IN HONOLULU, IT WILL COST GOWS APPROXIMATELY \$6,000 EACH TO AIR SHIP THEM FROM HONOLULU TO PAGO PAGO; (C) IN LIGHT OF FOREGOING, DOES GOWS STILL SEEK USG ASSISTANCE. MACKENZIE ADMITTED THERE HAD BEEN SOME GOWS CONFUSION ON THE MATTER, SAID HE WOULD PASS INFORMATION TO EIKENI AND REPEATED THAT EIKENI PLANNED TO GO TO HONOLULU TO LOCATE SUITABLE CARS.

6. SUBSEQUENTLY, I MET WITH GOWS HIGH COMMISSIONER TO NEW ZEALAND (BETHAM) IN MY OFFICE ON JANUARY 13. I BROUGHT THE HIGH COMMISSION UP TO DATE, INCLUDING THE COST OF SHIPMENT OF THE VEHICLES TO PAGO PAGO. HE OFFERED TO TELEPHONE OR TELEGRAPH THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE FOR CLARIFICATION. WE DID NOT HEAR AGAIN FROM HIM. ON JANUARY 14, I ADVISED CINCPAC OF STATE OF PLAY AS I SAW IT, TOLD POLAD WE SUSPECTED EIKENI WOULD DROP IN ON HIM SEEKING ASSISTANCE AND ASKED HIM TO TELL EIKENI FACE-TO-FACE WHAT WE HAD BEEN TRYING TO CONVEY TO GOWS, APPARENTLY WITHOUT SUCCESS (SEE WELLINGTON 0152).

7. INTO THE MIDST OF THIS, JANUARY 19, ARRIVED A TELEGRAM FROM CINCPAC (DTG 182111Z JAN 77) PASSING ALONG A MESSAGE FROM THE
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BRITISH EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON. THAT MESSAGE ASKED CINCPAC TO

CONVEY TO THE GOWS THE FACT THAT "THE QUEEN DOES NOT WISH OVER-ELABORATE PREPARATIONS FOR HER AND WILL BE CONTENT WITH TRANSPORTATION ALREADY AVAILABLE IN APIA." BRITISH HIGHCOMMISSION IN NEW ZEALAND AND GNZ FOREIGN MINISTRY WERE EACH ASKED TO PASS THRUST OF THIS MESSAGE TO GOWS IN APIA. BOTH REFUSED ON GROUNDS THAT GOWS WOULD MISINTERPRETE MESSAGE AS UNDUE INTERFERENCE IN PURELY GOWS MATTERS.

8. CINCPAC'S JANUARY 20 (DTG 200232Z JAN 77) ADVISED THAT EIKENI NOW IN HONOLULU, HAD LOCATED ONE VEHICLE TOOLONG FOR COMMERCIAL CARRIER AND THAT HE WAS LIKELY TO REQUEST DOD AIRLIFT. ON JANUARY 21, ON SUSPICION THAT EIKENI CONTINUING TO FREELANCE ON MATTER, I SENT IMMEDIATE TELEGRAM TO SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT IN APIA. I NOTED THAT EIKENI HAD APPARENTLY LOCATED CAR, ASKED IF GOWS INDEED WANTED IT AND INQUIRED AGAIN WHETHER GOWS PREPARED TO REIMBURSE DOD FOR EXPENSE OF HONOLULU TO PAGO PAGO AIRLIFT. I HAVE HAD NO REPLY TO THIS CABLE.

9. COMMENT: EIKENI OBVIOUSLY DID NOT WANT TO HEAR WHAT WE WERE TELLING HIM. I CAN ONLY SURMISE THAT HE BELIEVED THAT BY WAITING UNTIL LAST MINUTE AND THEN SHOWING UP IN HONOLULU, HE COULD PRESSURE USG INTO SHIPPING CARS VIA DOD CHANNELS FREE OF CHARGE. AS FAR AS I AM CONCERNED, EIKENI'S ADVICE TO POLAD THAT HE IS CANCELLING THE PURCHASE WRITES AN END TO THE MATTER. GOWS HAS KNOWN FOR MORE THAN SIX MONTHS THAT QUEEN WOULD BE VISITING. THIS ENTIRE EXERCISE IS TYPICAL OF THE GOWS PENCHANT FOR DELAYING DECISIONS UNTIL THE LAST MOMENT AND THEN GOING OFF SIMULTANEOUSLY IN SEVERAL DIFFERENT, UNCOORDINATED DIRECTIONS. IN LIGHT OF FOREGOING RECORD, IT IS OBVIOUS EIKENI'S ALLEGATION TO POLAD THAT INADEQUATE EMBASSY WELLINGTON COMMUNICATIONS WAS AT BASE OF PROBLEM IS INCORRECT AND MISSTATED. SHORT OF ASKING GOWS TO REPEAT EACH MESSAGE THREE TIMES, WE HAVE TRIED EVERY CONCEIVABLE MEANS TO HELP THEM UNDERSTAND. THAT EIKENI DID NOT "UNDERSTAND" UNTIL HE WAS IN HAWAII WAS OF HIS OWN CHOOSING.

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Message Attributes

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